

They are led by a Commissioner of Education, appointed by the Board of Education. Six men and women have served as Commissioner, each of whom has left an indelible imprint on PSS and the lives of its students.

The first Commissioner, Mr. Henry Sablan, led the organization through a period of transition from a Department of Education organized under the Office of the Governor to an autonomous public education system answerable to an elected Board. Dr. Elizabeth Diaz Rechebeli then shepherded the school system for two years, followed by Mr. William S. Torres, who served for six years and initiated a move towards regional accreditation.

Dr. Rita Hocog Inos, in whose memory the junior and senior high school on the island of Rota is named, served as Commissioner of Education for eight years and implemented the SAT10 testing program and standards-based assessment for students, as well as the PRAXIS highly qualified teacher initiative for instructional staff. Dr. David Borja then led the system for two years, followed by our current Commissioner, Dr. Rita A. Sablan.

Dr. Sablan has, since assuming her role in 2008, focused tremendous attention on student academic achievement and guided the organization through a period of declining financial resources and increasing performance standards.

Thanks to the cumulative efforts of these six leaders, and their thousands of colleagues over the years, our students are performing better than ever on SAT10 tests, standards-based assessments, and on STAR reading and STAR math assessments. That performance is reflected in the 60 percent of graduating high school seniors who go on to college. Another 30 percent choose to serve our country in the armed forces. And 10 percent join the workforce.

Please join me in saluting those elected officials who, twenty-five years ago, recognized the value of an autonomous education system in the Northern Mariana Islands and enacted the Education Act. Also, join me in celebrating the many who built upon that foundation. The prescience of those leaders, and the hard work and dedication of the members of the Board of Education, the Commissioners, and the thousands of instructors and staff has brought us to the present-day successes of our Public School System.

Each and every individual who contributed to this achievement deserves the esteem and gratitude of the people of the Northern Mariana Islands.

HONORING SHANICE WIMSATT

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 17, 2013

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Ms. Shanice Wimsatt, a dedicated student, who is making a difference in her community.

Shanice Wimsatt, was born in Chicago, IL on October 9, 1994. For about six years she grew up in an apartment in Chicago with her mother, Vivian Mitchell, her father, James Wimsatt and two older brothers, Jermaine and Andre Mitchell.

At about the age of six, they moved to Yazoo City, MS. She quickly began to excel in

her studies. By doing so well, she was invited to be in a high performance program called DIG. But, upon entering into the fourth grade, DIG offered her a chance to skip a grade or two. This was one of the first most important decisions she faced and she was not able to accept the offer, because by then her mother had started moving to Pickens, MS where she currently lives.

Life in Holmes county has taught her many things. Her strengths and decisions have been tested and challenged. She quickly learned that she was in poverty and did not like it at all. She set out to change or at least help change her community.

She first started an all girls group, during a critical pregnancy period and called it I.Y.G. (Independent Young Girls). Her goal was to empower the young ladies at her school by showing them that they have supporters. Next, she and a friend teamed up and created Teens on a Mission. This was created to provide more jobs for the teens in the area and to show the world that teenagers can make a difference, being that, some were voted least likely to succeed.

She is now making a great difference in her community and for herself.

REMEMBERING THE 9/11 ATTACKS

HON. RUSH HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 17, 2013

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, it has been twelve years since that terrible day when nearly 3000 of our fellow citizens perished in an unprovoked series of attacks on our nation. And while the key perpetrators of that horror are now themselves either dead or in our custody, the pain and the heroism of Americans on that day are something we must never forget.

I remember Todd Beamer of Cranbury, New Jersey, who, along with the other passengers on Flight 93, made the ultimate sacrifice to save more people in Washington, DC from almost certain death. I also remember "the Jersey Girls"—Kristen Breitweiser, Patty Casazza, Lone Van Auken, and Mindy Kleinberg—who, along with other family members, battled President Bush to force the creation of the 9/11 Commission. These men and women of 9/11—those who perished and those who preserve their memory—remind us of the strength and resilience of the American spirit.

Mr. Speaker, I hope the spirit of unity and common purpose that we experienced in the wake of the 9/11 tragedy can be rekindled in our nation and used to confront the many serious problems facing America. May we each play our part in reviving that spirit, even as we honor the memory of those who showed on that fateful September morning twelve years ago.

HONORING THOMAS ALAN REILLY, JUNIOR

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 17, 2013

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Thomas Alan Reilly, Jr. Thomas is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 251, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Thomas has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Thomas has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Thomas has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Thomas Alan Reilly, Jr., for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

MABEL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
"PEACE DAY"

HON. VIRGINIA FOXX

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 17, 2013

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, the students at Mabel Elementary School in Watauga County are observing "International Peace Day" this Friday.

I commend them for taking the time to pay such special attention to a cause as important as peace.

Each student at Mabel Elementary School has a part to play in building peace.

As I told the student, peace starts with respect—respect for yourself, your family, your classmates, your teachers, and for our American values of life, liberty, personal responsibility, and equality.

Pursuing peace goes hand-in-hand with practicing respect. And practicing respect is a choice each of us will make for the rest of our lives.

President Ronald Reagan, in a speech to students at Moscow State University, said "A people free to choose will always choose peace."

In this country, we not only have the freedom to make that choice, we also have wonderful examples to follow as we learn to practice respect and build peace.

No one values peace more than the men and women who serve in our armed forces. These brave people and their families sacrifice to defend freedom and pursue peace in our world. When bad things happen and when we find ourselves in danger, they answer the call to protect us and they always work to find peace.

It takes courage and conviction to choose to treat others with respect and pursue peace. But peace is a noble calling and a just goal.

By practicing peace and respect at home and in school, Mabel Elementary students can